

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Serial No. 09/989,373
Our Ref: Q67325

REMARKS

The Examiner has objected to the Abstract of the Disclosure as containing the legal phraseology "means." Applicants have amended the Abstract above.

Claims 1 and 2 are all the claims pending in the application and have been rejected under §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ogawa (U.S. Patent No. 5,115,108) in view of Serizawa (U.S. Patent No. 6,239,392).

Serizawa is prior art under §102(a) because it issued on May 29, 2001, prior to our filing date of November 21, 2001. In order to take advantage of the new provision in §103(c), Applicants have perfected their claim to foreign priority under §119, which converts the Serizawa reference from §102(a) prior art to §102(e) prior art. Under the new provision of §103(c), a commonly owned patent that is prior art under §102(e) cannot be used in a §103 rejection. To perfect the claim to priority, Applicants submit herewith a Verified English Translation of the Priority Document.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. It is therefore respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue at the earliest possible convenience. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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WASHINGTON OFFICE



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PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Date: February 12, 2003

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APPENDIX

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE ABSTRACT OF DISCLOSURE:

The abstract is changed as follows:

A multi-stage click switch (21) includes a contact circuit member (25) having switch contact portions (41a, 41b, 42a and 42b) disposed respectively in opposed relation to pressing portions (36a, 36b, 37a and 37b) formed on an operating knob (35) mounted on a housing (32), and a rubber switch member (30) having rubber contact portions (28a, 28b, 29a and 29b) which can sequentially close and open the switch contact portions in a multi-stage manner in accordance with the movement of the pressing portions. Each of the rubber contact portions produces a suitable click feeling by a resilient force, produced by elastic deformation of the rubber contact portion, at the time of operating the operating knob (35). The rubber contact portion (28a) has an overstroke means ~~means~~ feature by which after its conductive piece (22a, 23a) contacts the opposing switch contact portion (41a, 42a), a click feeling is not produced until the switching operation of the rubber contact portion (28b, 29b) is completed.